

# Staff Allocation Policy for Accommodation at Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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**Status:** Approval date: May 2019  
Ratified by: TEC  
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## History

Issue	Date Issued	Brief Summary of Change	Approved by
1	May 2019	New policy	TEC

For more information on the status of this document, please contact:	Colleen Sherlock – c.sherlock@nhs.net
Policy Author	Isabelle Tingle
Department/Directorate	Workforce & Organisational Development
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Audience	All staff

### Executive summary

This policy lays out the procedure for the application and allocation of accommodation at Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (ASPH), hereafter referred to as "the Trust". There are three sets of accommodation, managed by several organisations:

- Optivo Housing – onsite accommodation at St Peter's;
- Vivid Homes – Sandgates
- A2 Dominion Group – Ashford accommodation.

These organisations are referred to as the Trust's Accommodation Partners.

This policy has been set out in conjunction with the legal and nomination agreement between the Trust and its Accommodation Partners. Tenancies are usually issued by way of Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreements made between the Tenant and the Trust's Accommodation Partners – monitored by the Estates and Facilities directorate of the Trust.

The provision of staff accommodation is essential for the successful recruitment and retention of staff for the Trust and provides modern and affordable flats to rent located on or close to the hospital sites.

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**See also: Any relevant trust policies/guidelines or procedures**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Trust is committed to providing access to appropriate residential accommodation sufficient to meet its needs. Nomination rights to the tenancies at the Trust are an important element of the Trust's recruitment and retention strategy and therefore must be deployed effectively and fairly. This policy sets out the criteria and prioritisation process which the Trust will adopt when nominating staff to its accommodation.

## 2. Explanation of Terms Used

- 2.1 Key Workers means:

- a) in the first instance any person employed by any Health Service body and/or a self-employed person working in the NHS; and/or any student nurse or midwife or any other medical or healthcare student; and
- b) in the event that no persons in category (a) are available, any person working or engaged in work with any of the public sector bodies or similar organisations providing services that are essential for the continuing sustainability of the local community and local economy.

- 2.2 Trust Accommodation Partners refers to the three organisations that provide Accommodation for Trust staff: Optivo; Vivid Homes; A2 Dominion Group.

## 3. Policy Purpose

- 3.1 To establish a consistent, auditable, and transparent policy for the Trust to nominate and prioritise requests for accommodation through the Accommodation Partners.
- 3.2 To support the Trust's recruitment and retention priorities and initiatives by making the Trust a more attractive and employee-friendly place to work.
- 3.3 To help address the issues around staffing shortages and support recruitment of 'hard-to-recruit' positions.
- 3.4 To provide the Trust's Director of Estates and Facilities and the Trust's Accommodation Partners with a system that will be objective, fair and easy to administer, in line with the existing nominations agreement between all parties, and minimise voids in the properties.
- 3.5 To not exclude any group, but to provide clear priorities for certain staff groups for accommodation, according to accepted criteria. To recognise that the Trust will not be able to meet all requests for residential accommodation.
- 3.6 To ensure that once tenants leave the Trust or Key Worker employment they cease to be eligible for Trust residential accommodation so that tenancies can be available to assist other staff members. Tenancies are usually for a 6 month term, renewable for duration that staff are in accommodation.

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## 4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all staff members applying for Trust accommodation.
- 4.2 This policy lays out the process for the application and allocation of staff accommodation. Once an applicant has been successful in gaining this accommodation, the tenancy agreements will be directly between the applicant and the relevant Trust Accommodation Partner and all financial elements will remain between these two parties.
- 4.3 A series of criteria with an agreed weighting has been established by the Trust to enable the Trust to prioritise applications, and to manage a waiting list if required. Staff requesting accommodation will be assessed for accommodation in line with these criteria.

The current criteria are detailed in the attached Weighting Matrix (Appendix 1). The scarcity, turnover rate, salary and shift pattern of the staff category to which the applicant belongs will be reviewed. As will the distance of their current residence, whether they have children living with them, and the length of time that they have been on the Trust accommodation waiting list.

Points will accrue accordingly, and the applicant will be assigned an eligibility rating as per Appendix 2.

- 4.4 Allocation of accommodation will be prioritised based on the total number of points achieved by each individual as per Appendix 5. There will be no minimum score; rather accommodation will be allocated to those with the highest priority indicated by the scoring. Applicants who are not allocated accommodation shall be placed on the accommodation waiting list held by the Trust's Accommodation Partners.
- 4.5 If there is more than one person on the waiting list with the same points score, applicants will be selected on the basis of who has been on the waiting list for the longest time. The Trust retains the discretion to consider any special circumstances e.g. the applicant's current housing situation such as pending homelessness.
- 4.6 Appeals against any decisions made regarding the allocation of accommodation can be made in writing to the **Accommodation Officer and** Director of Estates and Facilities.
- 4.7 As per current housing legislation, tenancy agreements shall be initially for 6 months, with a notice period of 4 weeks from the tenant and 2 months from the Landlord. **Notice should be given in a written format and not done verbally.**
- 4.8 If a member of staff leaves the employment of the Trust then the Accommodation Partner will be informed and the resident given the agreed notice period under their tenancy agreement to find alternative accommodation, if the room is required for other staff. If the member of staff is moving within the key worker categorizations then they will be reassessed to see if they remain eligible for accommodation. This is in line with the current nominations agreement between the Trust and its

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Accommodation Partners.

4.9 The following minimum length of tenancy guarantees are in place for staff members who are successful in their application for Trust accommodation:

- UK and EU staff banded 1-6 and doctors in training are guaranteed a minimum of a 2 year tenancy.
- Non-EU overseas staff banded 1-6 and career grade/clinical fellows are guaranteed a minimum of a 3 year tenancy.
- All staff banded 7, or consultants are guaranteed a minimum of a 12 month tenancy.

The Workforce & Organisational Development (W&OD) department may advise the Trust's Accommodation Partners to serve a tenant notice if the following occurs:

- A tenant is found to no longer qualify for accommodation following re-assessments, in accordance with the eligibility rating mechanism.
- A tenant has surpassed their guaranteed minimum tenancy, and a staff member with a higher priority scoring, according to the eligibility rating mechanism, requires Trust accommodation.

In these events, the W&OD department will notify the relevant Trust Accommodation Partner to request that notice is served. The Accommodation Partner will review this and advise the Trust accordingly. This complies with the current nominations agreement between the Trust and its Accommodation Partners.

## 5. Duties and responsibilities

There are specific roles and responsibilities to designated persons under this policy as laid out below:

- 5.1 The Director of Workforce Transformation will review the relative importance of recruitment and retention factors based on the current relative difficulties being experienced in the recruitment of staff. S/he will review the recruitment and retention factor regularly to ensure that the staff groups identified as 'hard to recruit' are up to date, based on current data, including Trust vacancies and turnover, and other relevant recruitment data.
- 5.2 The **Accommodation Officer & W&OD department** will be responsible for the assessment of all completed application forms as per the Nominations agreement.
- 5.3 All housing related enquiries, including complaints concerning service failure will be a matter between the tenant and landlord. These should be communicated in writing to the relevant Trust Accommodation Partner in the first instance. Trust Accommodation tenants will have access to the Housing Associations internal complaints procedure but may also make their complaint known to the Trust via the Director of Estates and Facilities.

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## 6. Dissemination and Implementation

### 6.1 Dissemination:

A copy of this policy can be obtained from:

- The Trust's Estates and Facilities Directorate
- The Trust's W&OD Department
- The Trust's Policies site on the Trust Intranet
- The Accommodation Partners' on site office
- The Accommodation Partners' web site

Copies of this policy will be sent to ALL residents for information and any updates will be made available to them via the ASPH intranet and internet website and departments as listed above.

### 6.2 Implementation:

This policy is to be implemented by the Estates and Facilities Directorate in conjunction with any legal agreements between the Trust, its Accommodation Partners and W&OD department.

## 7. Approval and Ratification

7.1 The policy will be presented to the Employee Partnership Forum for feedback. The policy will be approved at TEC.

## 8. Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

8.1 The purpose of the policy has been discussed at EPF. The allocations criteria have been tested with a cross division panel to develop a robust set of criteria. The principle of holding a nomination list according to a set of criteria has been discussed with a selection of existing tenants and has been welcomed.

## 9. Review and Revision Arrangements

9.1 This policy will be reviewed at the date stated by the W&OD department. It may be subject to change at that time or at an earlier date if necessary.

9.2 The weighting matrix for accommodation allocation will be regularly reviewed by the Director of Workforce Transformation to ensure that the policy continues to help address the issues around staffing shortages and support recruitment of 'hard-to-recruit' positions.

## 10. Equality Impact Assessment

10.1 An impact assessment has been carried out for this policy (Appendix 7). This has indicated that no further action is required at this time.

## 11. Document Control and Archiving

11.1 This is a trust-wide document and archiving arrangements are managed by the Quality department who can be contacted to request master/ archived copies.

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## 12. Monitoring compliance with this Policy

The table below outlines the process for monitoring compliance with this document.

Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness				
Activity being monitored	Responsibility for performing the monitoring	Methodology to be used for monitoring	Frequency of monitoring and reporting arrangements	Monitoring reported to the following groups/ committees
<i>Application of the eligibility rating in the allocation of Trust accommodation.</i>	<i>Director of Estates and Facilities</i>	<p><i>Criteria are set as laid out in appendices for staff who wish to apply for accommodation.</i></p> <p><i>All forms are checked once received and scored according to the eligibility criteria as laid out in the appendices.</i></p> <p><i>Waiting lists are monitored on a monthly basis.</i></p> <p><i>Appeals are monitored on a monthly basis.</i></p>	<p><i>Monitoring occurs monthly via review meetings with the housing provider and the Trust's Estates and Facilities team.</i></p> <p><i>6 monthly reviews to be carried out by the W&amp;OD department to ensure that staff scarcity category is reviewed.</i></p> <p><i>Annual review of Policy in light of trust changes as and when these occur.</i></p>	<i>To be reviewed at Partnership Forum as and when changes occur by Estates and Facilities department.</i>

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## Appendix 1

### Weighting matrix

Weighting Matrix	Description	Points
<b>Staff Category</b>	Qualified existing staff Bank only Not directly employed by ASPH	0
	Unqualified staff in training	5
	Newly qualified recruit	10
<b>Category of Staff Scarcity</b>	Nurses and Midwives/ AHPs	10
	Doctors	10
<b>Turnover Rate – measured against Trust/ department target</b>	Green rated for turnover	0
	Amber rated for turnover	5
	Red rated for turnover	10
<b>Salary</b>	Bands 7 and above, Consultant	0
	Bands 5 – 6, trust Grade, clinical fellow	5
	Bands 1 – 4, Doctors in Training	10
<b>Healthcare Role</b>	Admin & Clerical, Management	0
	Clinical Support Services	5
	Clinical Services professional	10
<b>Current Residence – distance from hospital</b>	Less than 10 miles	0
	11 - 25 miles	2
	26 – 50 miles	5
	More than 50 miles	10
	Overseas	15
<b>Shift work</b>	No	0
	Yes	5
	On-call	10
<b>Children living with staff member</b>	Yes	10
	No	0
<b>Length of time on waiting list</b>	Up to 1 month	0
	1 – 3 months	2
	4 - 6 months	5
	More than 6 months	10
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	No concern about accommodation	0
	Low level of concern	5
	Anxiety / impact on wellbeing	10

**\*To validate staff scarcity the line manager must confirm the following:**

Has the post been intentionally held (e.g. to make savings, or pending restructure)?	
State the number of times the post has been advertised in the last six months.	
Are the essential requirements on the person specification reasonable for this post?	
Is the post on the national shortages list?  Check on gov.uk link: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-k-shortage-occupation-list">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-k-shortage-occupation-list</a>	
Is RRP attached to the post?	

In exceptional circumstances there may be flexibility to offer short term tenancy for 1-3 months. This would need to be agreed by Director of Workforce Transformation.

**Please note that when tenancy reviews of existing Trust Accommodation residents are carried out a notional score of 3 will be applied for the travelling distance criteria.**

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## **Appendix 2**

### **Eligibility Rating**

<b>Eligibility Rating</b>	<b>Scoring Value</b>
<b>Low priority</b> Will be given advice on alternative housing options. Can join a waiting list in date order, and where a tenancy is not needed for a priority group will be assisted.	Score up to 30
<b>Medium priority</b> Accommodation potentially offered when available for the time limits set out in the policy, and then priority reviewed on annual basis	Between 31-59
<b>High priority</b> Accommodation provided when available. Priority reviewed and accommodation offered on annual basis.	Between 60 - 85

## **Appendix 3**

### **Application for Residential Accommodation.**

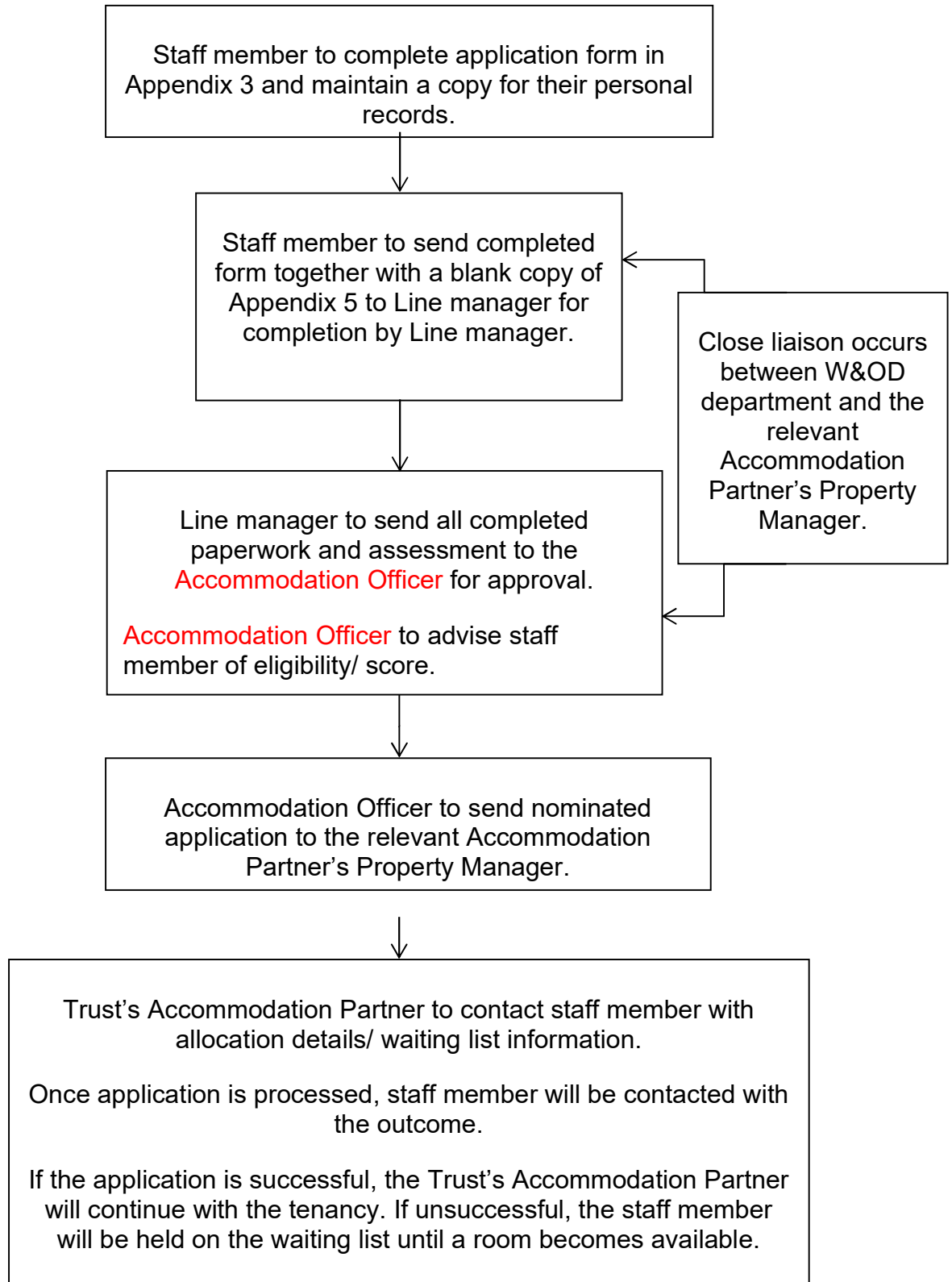
Applications can be found on the Trustnet and from the Recruitment Team

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## Appendix 4

### Flowchart for Allocation of Accommodation

(Process to take approximately 1-2 weeks)



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**Appendix 5**

**Manager's Request for Trust Accommodation for Staff**

<b>Candidate's Name:</b>		
<b>Category of staff</b>	Is this applicant a new recruit?	Yes/ No
<b>Staff scarcity</b>	How easy is it to recruit this type of staff group?  Length of vacancy:	Easy Medium Difficult  _____ months
<b>Turnover Rate</b>	What is the turnover rate of this staff group within your area?	Green Amber Red
<b>Salary</b>	What is the AfC band?	Bands 1-4 Bands 5-6 Bands 7 +
<b>Healthcare Role</b>	Type of position?	
<b>Travelling Distance</b>	Provide postcode of current address.	
<b>Signature of Head of Department:</b> ..... <b>Name (please print):</b> ..... <b>Title:</b> ..... <b>Contact number (telephone/bleep/fax):</b> ..... <b>Please return the completed form plus the application request form to:</b> .....		

## **Appendix 6**

### **Equality Impact Assessment Summary**

**Name and title:**

<b>Background</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who was involved in the Equality Impact Assessment</li></ul>
The aim of the policy is:  X was involved in the Equality Impact Assessment.
<b>Methodology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A brief account of how the likely effects of the policy was assessed (to include race and ethnic origin, disability, gender, culture, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age)</li><li>• The data sources and any other information used</li><li>• The consultation that was carried out (who, why and how?)</li></ul>
<b>Key Findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe the results of the assessment</li><li>• Identify if there is adverse or a potentially adverse impacts for any equalities groups</li></ul>
<b>Conclusion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a summary of the overall conclusions</li></ul>
<b>Recommendations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State recommended changes to the proposed policy as a result of the impact assessment</li><li>• Where it has not been possible to amend the policy, provide the detail of any actions that have been identified</li><li>• Describe the plans for reviewing the assessment</li></ul>

## **Appendix 8**

### **Checklist for the Review and Approval of Documents**

To be completed (electronically) and attached to any document which guides practice when submitted to the appropriate committee for approval or ratification.

**Title of the document:**

**Policy (document) Author:**

**Executive Director:**

		<b>Yes/No/ Unsure/ NA</b>	<b><u>Comments</u></b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Title</b>		
	Is the title clear and unambiguous?		
	Is it clear whether the document is a guideline, policy, protocol or standard?		
<b>2.</b>	<b>Scope/Purpose</b>		
	Is the target population clear and unambiguous?		
	Is the purpose of the document clear?		
	Are the intended outcomes described?		
	Are the statements clear and unambiguous?		
<b>3.</b>	<b>Development Process</b>		
	Is there evidence of engagement with stakeholders and users?		
	Who was engaged in a review of the document (list committees/ individuals)?		
	Has the policy template been followed (i.e. is the format correct)?		
<b>4.</b>	<b>Evidence Base</b>		
	Is the type of evidence to support the document identified explicitly?		
	Are local/organisational supporting documents referenced?		
<b>5.</b>	<b>Approval</b>		
	Does the document identify which committee/group will approve/ratify it?		
	If appropriate, have the joint human resources/staff side committee (or equivalent) approved the document?		
<b>6.</b>	<b>Dissemination and Implementation</b>		
	Is there an outline/plan to identify how this will be done?		
	Does the plan include the necessary training/support to ensure compliance?		

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		Yes/No/ Unsure/ NA	<u>Comments</u>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Process for Monitoring Compliance</b>		
	Are there measurable standards or KPIs to support monitoring compliance of the document?		
<b>8.</b>	<b>Review Date</b>		
	Is the review date identified and is this acceptable?		
<b>9.</b>	<b>Overall Responsibility for the Document</b>		
	Is it clear who will be responsible for coordinating the dissemination, implementation and review of the documentation?		
<b>10.</b>	<b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>		
	Has a suitable EIA been completed?		

**Committee Approval (insert name of Committee)**

If the committee is happy to approve this document, please complete the section below, date it and return it to the Policy (document) Owner

Name of Chair	Date

**Ratification by Management Executive (if appropriate)**

If the Management Executive is happy to ratify this document, please complete the date of ratification below and advise the Policy (document) Owner

**Date: n/a**